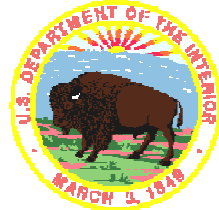




BLM News Release

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Prescribed Burns Scheduled for Rail Canyon

Vale, OR, May 25--Fire experts from the Vale District of the Bureau of Land Management will conduct at least two prescribed burns this spring in an 8,000-acre area of Rail Canyon 40 miles northwest of Vale. The first 100-acre block is scheduled to be ignited with drip torches within the next two weeks, if weather allows.

The purpose of the prescribed burns is to improve the health of rangelands, woodlands, and stream sides within the project area. Acting District Manager Penny Dunn-Woods said, "These controlled burns in the Rail Canyon project area will help us return fire to the ecosystem. These and subsequent ignitions will reduce juniper encroachment, initiate aspen regrowth, increase grasses and forbs along streams and on hillsides, and reduce chances of a catastrophic wildfire."

According to Fire Management Officer Mike Hartwell, Malheur County residents may observe smoke periodically throughout the spring season from the Rail Canyon prescribed burns. "Spring burning is done annually as soon as areas are free of snow and environmental conditions allow for safe burning. It may take us up to two years to complete the Rail Canyon project depending on weather conditions and our ability to meet preestablished prescriptions for safe burning," said Hartwell.

For additional information about these prescribed burning projects, please contact the Vale Fire Management Office at (541) 473-6265.

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